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These are strong, well reasoned, thoughtful chapters and constitute the strength of the book. The remaining chapters are interesting, but are overshadowed. The book is written in clear, forceful English; it is not the language of persuasion, but the language of conviction. Where it does not elicit hearty sympathy it arouses deep, earnest thought and compels clear and definite arguments in rebuttal. The winnowing has been well done, and we have a real and valuable contribution to educational literature from a man who is manifestly in touch with actual conditions in elementary, secondary, and university education. To those who are interested in the study of education and the work of training teachers this book will commend itself as a specially valuable text-book.

GEO. H. LOCKE

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*Text-Book of Algebra for Schools and Colleges.* By G. E. FISHER and I. J. SCHWATT. Philadelphia: Fisher & Schwatt, 1898.

THE text-book of Fisher and Schwatt is clearly designed to meet the needs of those who study algebra for mental discipline and to stimulate teachers to appreciate and to present to their pupils the logic involved in every process. It is a commendable effort in the line of a most hopeful reaction which is taking place against rote work in the teaching of preparatory mathematics.

The essential desideratum is to formulate the reasoning in the earlier topics in a sufficiently simple manner and to increase the frequency and rigor of the formal demonstrations in a degree suited to the mental growth and advancement of the pupils. Whether the authors have uniformly met this prime condition of excellence can only be determined by the test of class-room use. For the benefit of those who feel that too much space is given to this feature of the book, the proofs have been placed after the formulation and ample illustration of the principles, so that some or all of the demonstrations may be omitted, still retaining the usual rules and exercises for mechanical work.

Even such a use of this text would be better than to use a book containing a minimum of logic and reasoning, since some students would surely catch the spirit of the authors and be led on to appreciate algebra as a science as well as an art of computation.

The fullness of treatment, clearness of statement, and attention to

the minutest detail, cannot fail to be of the utmost value to the thoughtful student. It may, however, be feared that this high merit has carried the volume to such large proportions as to exclude it from general use in the high schools.

In the presentation of positive and negative numbers a theoretically historical development is followed which is contrary to actual experience, and so must appear artificial and arbitrary to the student. Namely, negative numbers are defined as numbers less than zero which were *invented* in order to extend subtraction to the case in which the subtrahend is larger than the minuend, and incidentally it turns out that positive and negative numbers tend to destroy each other when they are combined, whereas this latter property is the characteristic of many quantities already known to the student in arithmetic, and he looks to algebra not to invent them, but to show him how to use them. From this one defining property follow naturally and logically all other properties and applications of positive and negative numbers.

One mechanical fault is so glaring in contrast to the unusual excellence in other respects that its existence is a matter of surprise. This is the unwieldy, bungling, and exasperating system of cross-reference; for instance, chap. xiii, § 3, Art. 12 (III). Unless one refers constantly to the index, there is no way of discovering to what chapter and section any article belongs but to turn back page by page to the beginning of the chapter and then count the sections through to the desired article.

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*The Physical Nature of the Child and how to Study it.* By STUART H. ROWE. The Macmillan Company.

THE attractive binding, good paper, and clear print of this book, as well as its modest size, are certainly not calculated to frighten away intending readers. The author has produced a simple, interesting and practical discussion of a side of education that is constantly assuming greater importance, but can never assume an importance beyond its desert. The book brings together the most important conclusions of scientific investigators upon the different topics connected with the growth and development of the child, especially as affected by school work. All is presented in such a way that any reader having once begun must be interested and encouraged to go further. The work is